

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

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INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (P A R A 4 , 5 A N D 6)

EO 11652:V N/A
TAGS: OVIP (SENATOR FULBRIGHT)
SUBJECT: FULBRIGHT VISIT TO IRAQ

REF: BAGHDAD 630 (NOTAL)

1. SENATOR FULBRIGHT'S VISIT TO IRAQ ENDED IN SAME SPIRIT
OF FRIENDLINESS IN WHICH IT BEGAN (REFTEL). TONE OF TRIP
WAS RELAXED AND GENIAL, OWING BOTH TO CAREFUL SELECTION BY
GOI OF "HOSTS", AS WELL AS TO SENATOR'S OWN ABILITY TO PUT
IRAQIS AT EASE.

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2. SENATOR'S PPRINCIPAL MEETINGS WERE WITH PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN MINISTER. SENATOR TOLD CONTROL OFFICER USREY EARLY ON IN VISIT THAT ALTHOUGH SESSION WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN WOULD BE HELPFUL, SENATOR APPRECIATED FACT THAT SUCH A METTING MIGHT BE DIFFICULT TO ARRANGE DUE PRINCE FAHD'S PRESENCE. FACT THAT SENATOR SAW PRESIDENT AL-BAKR AND FORMIN HAMMADI INDICATES THAT GOI ASSIGNED HIGHEST PRIORITY TO VISIT.

3. VISIT CONTRASTED WITH KENNEDY CODEL IN TERMS OF MEDIA COVERAGE. KENNEDY VISIT, VISIBLE AS IT WAS IN TERMS OF PUBLIC APPEARANCES AND SIZE OF PART, DID NOT RECEIVE NEARLY AMOUNT OF COVERAGE. FULBRIGHT RECEIVED GOOD TV, RADIO, AND NEWSPAPER COVERAGE, WHICH, ALTHOUGH SMALL BY STANDARDS ELSEWHERE, WAS BIG STEP FORWARD HERE.

4. MFA OFFICIAL WHO ACTED AS INTERPRETER FOR FULBRIGHT'S CALL ON PRESIDENT AL-BAKR TOLD USINT ACTING PRINCIPAL OFFICER THAT PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL INTEREST IN AND RESPECT FOR SENATOR WAS MADE ABUNDANTLY CLEAR IN COURSE ONE HOUR CALL. HE STRESSED THAT VISIT "COULD NOT HAVE BEEN MORE CORDIAL." ADDED THAT QUESTION OF RESUMPTION OF US-IRAQI DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS DID NOT ARISE. APART FROM STRESSING CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF FAIR RESOLUTION OF ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE, MAIN POINT PRESIDENT AL-BAKR MADE WAS THAT IRAQ WAS COMPLETELY OPEN TO US BUSINESSMEN AND COMPETENT AMERICAN FIRMS WOULD BE WELCOMED IN ANY AREA.

5. JUST PRIOR TO DEPARTURE, SENATOR TOLD USINT OFFICER IN PRESENCE OF MFA OFFICIALS THAT IT WAS USINT'S DUTY TO SEE TO IT THAT STATE DEPARTMENT AND ESPECIALLY PRESIDENT FORD REALIZED WHAT A DEADLY SERIOUS MATTER THE ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUE WAS. IN HIS OPINION NO OTHER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE US AND THE ARABS (TRADE, EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL, ETC) COULD BE SUSTAINED UNLESS ARAB-ISRAELI MATTER WAS SETTLED TO SATISFACTION OF ALL PARTIES.

6. COMMENT: HIGHLY VISIBLE VISIT HAS INCREASED INTENSE SPECULATION AMONG DIPLOMATS OF EARLY RENEWAL OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNIST DIPLOMATS VIEW KENNEDY AND FULBRIGHT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VISITS AS PART OF CONCERTED U.S. STRATEGY. IN OUR VIEW, THIS SPECULATION IS STILL SOMEWHAT PREMATURE AS EVIDENCED BY FACT THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN PREFERRED, AS WITH KENNEDY, TO STAY IN BACKGROUND AND KEEP PRESIDENT AL-BAKR OUT IN FRONT IN STRENGTHENING AMERICAN CONNECTION. YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR PURIC AGREES THAT SADDAM IS PARTICULARLY CAUTIOUS TOWARD U.S. AT THIS TIME. HE ATTRIBUTES IT TO CRITICISM FROM WITHIN PARTY OF SADDAM'S FAVORED TREATMENT OF AMERICAN

JOURNALISTS DURING PAST YEAR. IT IS CERTAINLY TRUE, AS
DEPT AWARE, THAT SADDAM HAS MADE SPECIAL EFFORT TO CULTIVATE
AMERICAN JOURNALISTS, BUT THIS IS FIRST CONCRETE REPORT
WE HAVE HAD THAT SADDAM BEING CRITICIZED AS "SOFT" ON U.S.
LOWRIE

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